IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) A method of producing a modified fiber product selected from printing paper and packaging material, according to which method

- cellulosic raw material is formed into a fiber suspension which consists essentially of, as the fiber component, cellulose fibers,
- components modifying the properties of fibers are added to the fiber suspension and
- the fiber ~~material~~ suspension is introduced to a paper machine and formed into a web,

characterized in that

- an alkyl derivative of cellulose selected from alkali soluble carboxymethyl cellulose, the DS of which is 0.1 to 0.4 and the polymerization degree of which is about 600-5000, is dissolved in an alkaline solution and then mixed into the fiber suspension at alkaline conditions, and
- the derivative is allowed to be bonded to the ~~fibrous raw material~~ cellulose fibers prior to the ~~fibrous material~~ cellulose fibers being formed into a web so that the bonded cellulose derivative can not be washed off with

water,

to produce a modified fiber product having strength suitable for printing paper and packaging material.

2-4. (cancelled)

5. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that the alkali soluble carboxymethyl cellulose is allowed to be sorbed to the ~~cellulose~~ cellulose fibers from the water phase so that at least 10% of the derivative contained by the water phase is allowed to be sorbed to the ~~cellulose~~ cellulose fibers.

6. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that the pH value of the ~~pulp~~ fiber suspension is more than 8.

7. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that the ~~pulp~~ fiber suspension is mixed with the alkali soluble carboxymethyl cellulose for at least 5 minutes before drying.

8-9. (cancelled)

10. (previously presented) A method according to claim 8, characterized in that the DS of the alkali soluble carboxymethyl cellulose is 0.2-0.4.

11. (cancelled)

12. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that about 10 %, at the most, of the alkali soluble carboxymethyl cellulose can be washed off the treated ~~fibrous raw material~~ cellulose fibers at a temperature of 25 C and a neutral pH value.

13. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that in comparison with untreated paper, the same internal bond strength is achieved while using at least 10 % less ~~pulp~~ cellulose fibers.

14. (previously presented) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that the alkali soluble carboxymethyl cellulose is contacted with the cellulose fibers in an alkaline flow of a pulp

or paper mill.

15. (previously presented) A method according to claim 14, characterized in that the alkali soluble carboxymethyl cellulose is contacted with the cellulose fibers in an alkaline bleaching stage.

16. (previously presented) A method according to claim 15, characterized in that the alkali soluble carboxymethyl cellulose is contacted with the cellulose fibers in the peroxide bleaching of mechanical pulp.

17. (previously presented) A method according to claim 16, characterized in that the alkali soluble carboxymethyl cellulose is first contacted with chemical pulp, subsequent to which the pulp is drained and the filtrate is introduced to the peroxide bleaching of mechanical pulp.

18. (previously presented) A method according to claim 14, characterized in that the alkali soluble carboxymethyl cellulose is mixed with the cellulose fibers subsequent to the beating of fibers.

19. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that the web forming is performed without an intermediate drying of ~~pulp~~ the fiber suspension after sorption of the alkali soluble carboxymethyl cellulose.

20. (previously presented) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that the amount of alkali soluble carboxymethyl cellulose is 0.1 to 5 % by weight of the cellulose fibers.

21. (canceled)

22. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that the alkali soluble carboxymethyl cellulose is allowed to be sorbed to the cellulose fibers from the water phase so that at least 20% of the alkali soluble carboxymethyl cellulose contained by the water phase is allowed to be sorbed to the cellulose fibers.

23. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that the alkali soluble carboxymethyl cellulose is allowed to be sorbed to the cellulose fibers from the water phase so that at least 30% of the alkali soluble carboxymethyl cellulose

contained by the water phase is allowed to be sorbed to the cellulose fibers.

24. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that the pH value of the ~~pulp~~ fiber suspension is more than 10.

25. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that the ~~pulp~~ fiber suspension is mixed with the alkali soluble carboxymethyl cellulose for at least 10 minutes before drying.

26. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that the ~~pulp~~ fiber suspension is mixed with the alkali soluble carboxymethyl cellulose for at least 20 minutes before drying.

27. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the alkali soluble carboxymethyl cellulose is bonded to the cellulose fibers at a pH of about 7 to 10.

28. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1,

wherein the treated ~~pulp~~ fiber suspension is filtered and washed subsequent to sorption, before introducing the ~~pulp~~ fiber suspension to the paper machine.